

---

## DEVELOPMENT OF DAOHUA: SOCIAL CONTEXTS OF A CHINESE-TIBETAN CREOLE

Litong Chen 陳利砦 (University of Mount Union)

### ABSTRACT

Daohua is a recently-discovered Chinese-Tibetan creole spoken in Yajiang County, Sichuan Province, China. While its lexicon is predominantly Chinese, its grammar is basically Tibetan. This study investigates the social contexts of the development of Daohua in the past three centuries, which is divided into two stages. The watershed is the early 1950s, when Chinese language classes started to be consistently taught in Yajiang. In each stage, Daohua presents specific characteristics and is compared with other well-known creoles. In the first stage, the formation process of Daohua resembles natural second language acquisition (SLA). Due to constant input of the superstrate language by continuous Chinese immigrants, Daohua in this stage developed as an intermediate creole without processes of radical restructuring. In the second stage, the formation of Daohua changed to a combination of both natural SLA and monitored SLA. Demographic evidence from historical records, especially local annals, supports this argument.

### KEYWORDS

Chinese, Chinese-Tibetan creole, Daohua, immigration, language policy, second language acquisition (SLA), Sichuan, social context, Tibetan, Yajiang

---

 CAPITALIZED LINGUISTICS ABBREVIATIONS

ABS absolutive case

ERG ergative case

OSV object-subject-verb (word order)

PFV perfective aspect

PROG progressive aspect

PRT particle

SOV subject-object-verb (word order)

SVO subject-verb-object (word order)

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Daohua, literally "reversed speech," is a recently-discovered Chinese-Tibetan creole spoken in Yajiang County, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China. It is the native language of 2,685 speakers from 504 households in eight villages (Acuo 2001, Sun et al. 2007).

In Yajiang County, since Mandarin Chinese is the official language, the clear majority of adult Daohua speakers can understand Chinese, and some can speak it. In addition, since Khams Tibetan (an eastern dialect) is widely spoken in Yajiang and neighboring counties, part of the adult Daohua population is also communicatively capable in Khams Tibetan (hereafter "Tibetan"). In school, children learn Chinese as a mandatory course. In some areas, Tibetan courses are also offered but before going to school, only Daohua is spoken (Acuo,

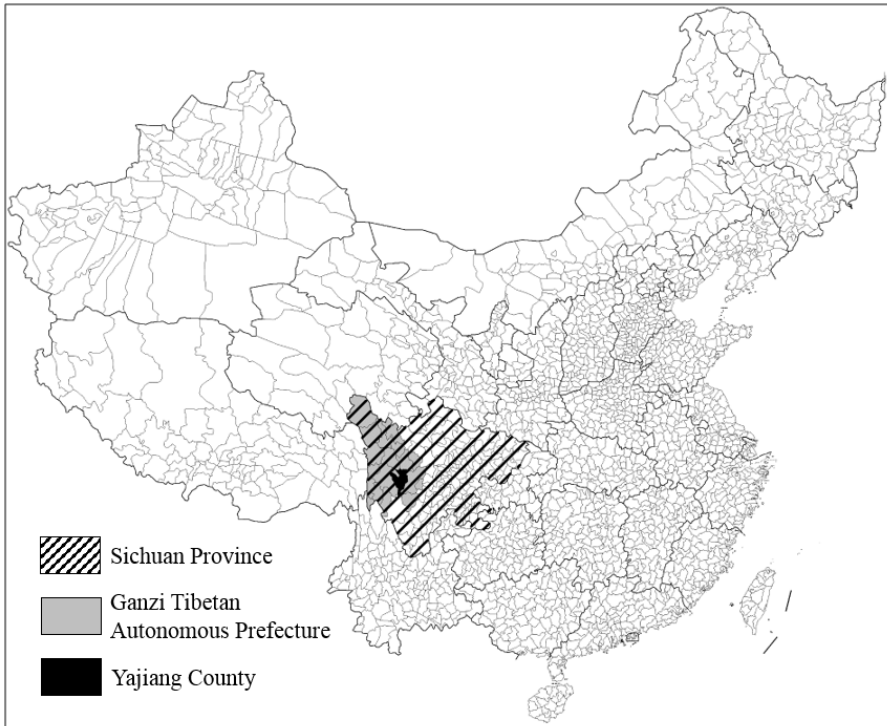
---

<sup>1</sup> I am deeply indebted to Dr. Yixiweisa Acuo (Yeshe Vodgsal Atshogs), who kindly shared with me his unpublished fieldwork observation reports. This study would have been impossible without his help and support. I also thank Dr. Donald Winford, whose lectures and comments have been a great help. I would also like to thank the AHP editors and two anonymous reviewers for suggestions. My appreciation also goes to Dr. Keith Dede for his generosity in sharing with me his pre-publication manuscript on mixed languages in China. I thank Nathaniel Carr for proofreading the drafts. Whatever errors remain are my own.

personal communication). Beyond the outlying villages, Daohua is also broadly spoken as a second language in Yajiang County Town, which is inhabited by both Tibetan and Chinese speakers. Acuo has suggested that Daohua has gained the status of common speech in the county town.

The geographic location of Yajiang County is shown in Map 1.

Map 1. Geographical Location of Yajiang County<sup>1</sup>



Acuo (2001, 2004) offers a comprehensive synchronic description of linguistic features of Daohua as well as a deep discussion on the mechanisms of the genesis of Daohua. However, his studies largely focus on linguistic analysis, and there is little on the social contexts of the development of Daohua. This research investigates

<sup>1</sup> The blank map of Chinese counties was retrieved 23 October 2016 from <https://goo.gl/pxKACr>. The locations of Sichuan Province, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and Yajiang County were marked by the author.

such social contexts in order to extend Acuo's research. Based on data from local annals, we argue for two stages of development in the history of Daohua. In each stage, this Chinese-Tibetan creole presented specific characteristics. This argument is supported by both Acuo's data and demographic evidence from elsewhere. Before we start the discussion, however, we give an overall account of some major linguistic features of Daohua based on Acuo's studies.

#### AN OVERVIEW OF DAOHUA

The most striking feature of Daohua is that while its lexicon is predominantly Chinese,<sup>1</sup> its grammar is basically Tibetan. According to Acuo's (2001) report, among 2,240 lexical items in Daohua that he surveyed in at least two long-term fieldworks, more than eighty-eight percent are Chinese forms, while Tibetan forms constitute slightly more than five percent of these words. In addition, about six percent "innate created forms" are unique to Daohua. They are not found in either source language. Core words from both the Swadesh one hundred and two hundred lists are all Chinese forms. Tibetan words are only found in some highly culturally-specific domains, such as religion, ceremonies, customs, and local plants/animals.

Regarding grammar, the basic Daohua word order is SOV. The position of the verb is fixed at the end of the sentence, with the relative positions of the subject and object being free. That said, both SOV and OSV are permitted, a virtual duplication of the Tibetan word order. The Chinese word order, in contrast, is SVO, with the location of subject and object strictly fixed.<sup>2</sup> Below are examples cited from Acuo (2004:52). Example (1) shows a SOV sentence. (Italicized portions are Tibetan, underlined portions are specific to Daohua, and the rest is

<sup>1</sup> In this study, following Acuo's terminology, "Chinese" consistently refers to Southwestern Mandarin unless specified otherwise.

<sup>2</sup> The flexible word order is the main reason why the Chinese-Tibetan creole is called Daohua "reversed speech." From a Chinese perspective, when the word order changes from SVO (Mandarin) to SOV/OSV (Tibetan), sentences sound reversed.

from Chinese. Also, note that not all Chinese forms have corresponding characters.)

|     |         |                             |             |                         |                |                                       |                             |
|-----|---------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) | Daohua  | 狗                           | <i>ki</i>   | 他                       | <i>ʂɐ</i>      | 咬                                     | <u><i>ɐ</i></u> - <i>lɔ</i> |
|     |         | <i>gou</i>                  | <i>ki</i>   | <i>ta</i>               | <i>ʂɐ</i>      | <i>ngo</i>                            | <u><i>ɐ</i></u> - <i>lɔ</i> |
|     |         | <i>dog</i>                  | ERG         | <i>he</i>               | ABS            | <i>bite</i>                           | PFV                         |
|     | Tibetan | <i>te' u<sup>51</sup>ge</i> | - <i>ki</i> | <i>k'o<sup>51</sup></i> | - <i>la</i>    | <i>so<sup>51</sup>tɔ<sup>51</sup></i> | - <i>t'e<sup>31</sup>zə</i> |
|     | Chinese | 狗                           |             | 咬                       | 了              | 他                                     |                             |
|     |         | <i>gou</i>                  |             | <i>ngao</i>             | <i>lo</i>      | <i>ta</i>                             |                             |
|     |         | <i>dog</i>                  |             | <i>bit</i>              | PRT- <i>le</i> | <i>he</i>                             |                             |

"a dog bit him"

The same meaning can also be conveyed in both Daohua and Tibetan as in Example (2). Note that the word order in Chinese cannot be changed, and Example (1) presents the only possible word order unless a passive particle is used.

|     |         |                         |             |                             |             |                                       |                             |
|-----|---------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (2) | Daohua  | 他                       | <i>ʂɐ</i>   | 狗                           | <i>ki</i>   | 咬                                     | <u><i>ɐ</i></u> - <i>lɔ</i> |
|     |         | <i>ta</i>               | <i>ʂɐ</i>   | <i>gou</i>                  | <i>ki</i>   | <i>ngo</i>                            | <u><i>ɐ</i></u> - <i>lɔ</i> |
|     |         | <i>he</i>               | ABS         | <i>dog</i>                  | ERG         | <i>bite</i>                           | PFV                         |
|     | Tibetan | <i>k'o<sup>51</sup></i> | - <i>la</i> | <i>te' u<sup>51</sup>ge</i> | - <i>ki</i> | <i>so<sup>51</sup>tɔ<sup>51</sup></i> | - <i>t'e<sup>31</sup>zə</i> |

"a dog bit him"

Examples (1) and (2) also show aspect and mood and are marked in Daohua by attaching certain suffixes to verbs. For instance, *-ɐ-lɔ* is the perfective aspect marker. Case assignment is also common. For instance, the ergative case marker is *-ki*, and the absolutive case marker is *-ʂɐ*. These features resemble the Tibetan morphosyntactic structures and are generally different from those in Chinese.

Like Tibetan, Daohua is an ergative-absolutive language, in which the subject of an intransitive verb behaves like the object of a transitive verb and not like the agent subject of a transitive verb. Chinese, on the other hand, is a nominative-accusative language, in

which the subject of an intransitive verb behaves like the agent subject of a transitive verb. Compare Examples (3) and (4) (Acuo 2004:63). Note that the subject in (3) and the object in (4) are marked identically with an empty case marker.

|     |        |    |   |      |                        |
|-----|--------|----|---|------|------------------------|
| (3) | Daohua | 他  | Ø | 疼    | di-jiu <sup>3</sup> li |
|     |        | ta |   | tong | di-jiu <sup>3</sup> li |
|     |        | he |   | pain | PROG                   |

"he is sick (lit. he is in sickness)"

|     |        |    |     |      |   |     |                        |
|-----|--------|----|-----|------|---|-----|------------------------|
| (4) | Daohua | 他  | ki  | 飯    | Ø | 吃   | di-jiu <sup>3</sup> li |
|     |        | ta | ki  | fan  |   | ci  | di-jiu <sup>3</sup> li |
|     |        | he | ERG | meal |   | eat | PROG                   |

"he is having meal"

With respect to the sound system, Daohua resembles Tibetan more than Chinese, though it contains features from both. Daohua has six prenasalized consonant cluster syllable onsets as well as a full set of voiced stops, both of which exist in Tibetan but not in Chinese. On the other hand, Daohua has seventeen diphthongs, which are fairly common in Chinese, but absent in Tibetan.

Also worth mentioning is the semantic correspondence among the three languages. Although the forms of lexical items in Daohua are predominantly from Chinese, the meanings of these words are usually closer to their Tibetan counterparts. For instance, the Daohua word *ji<sup>1</sup>ʂ<sup>2</sup>* originates from the Chinese word *yi<sup>1</sup>sang<sup>2</sup>*. However, *yi<sup>1</sup>sang<sup>2</sup>* only refers to "clothes" in Chinese, whereas in Daohua *ji<sup>1</sup>ʂ<sup>2</sup>* can also mean "blankets," which is the same as *ko<sup>13</sup>* in Tibetan. Another example is the absolutive case marker *-ʂv* as in (1) and (2). Its origin is in Chinese (from *sang<sup>4</sup>*); but *-ʂv* functions identically to the absolutive case marker *-la* in Tibetan. Therefore, Daohua in general has Tibetan lemma associated with Chinese lexeme. Table 1 summarizes the aforementioned main characteristics of Daohua.

Table 1. Two resources of Daohua.

|              |        | Tibetan | Chinese |
|--------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Lexicon      | Lemma  | +       | -       |
|              | Lexeme | -       | +       |
| Phonology    |        | +       | +       |
| Morphosyntax |        | +       | -       |

SOCIAL CONTEXTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DAOHUA

No language is created and developed in a vacuum; therefore, creation and development of a language to be analyzed should not be without reference to particular socio-historical circumstances. As Singler has pointed out, "The scenario that is put forward must be consistent with what is known of the history of particular places and times, but it must also be consistent with linguistic evidence" (2008:351). Singler specifically refers to the necessity for consistency and balance between the investigation of both socio-historical and linguistic evidence in order to hypothesize the *genesis* of creoles. For research on the *development* of creoles, likewise, a consistency and balance between socio-historical and linguistic evidence should also be achieved.

A significant amount of linguistic data has been provided in previous research on Daohua (Acuo 2001 and 2004, Sun et al. 2007), therefore, the current study considers socio-historical contexts in which linguistic changes of Daohua happened and strives for consistency and balance between relevant socio-historical records and the Chinese-Tibetan mixed nature of Daohua as presented today. To the best of my knowledge, between the arguable genesis of Daohua in the early eighteenth century and its being more fully described in the early twenty-first century by Acuo (2001), the scholarly literature has provided few clues as to what happened in the more than two centuries in between.

This study aims to bridge the gap and expand our current understanding of the developmental nature of Daohua as a Chinese-Tibetan creole. Specifically, this study proposes two stages of development for Daohua, separated by the early 1950s, when Chinese language classes began to be consistently taught in Yajiang County. Whenever appropriate, Daohua and its social contexts are compared with other well-known creoles and their social contact situations as introduced in the literature.

#### FROM GENESIS TO THE EARLY 1950S

Based on historical accounts in the Yajiang County Annals (2000, hereafter YCA), Yajiang was a homogeneously Tibetan county up to the early eighteenth century. The earliest group of Chinese speakers immigrated to this region in 1719, when Chinese troops entered the area to suppress Tibetan unrest. After the suppression, twenty Chinese boatmen stayed, settled, and married local Tibetan women in Yajiang. According to Acuo (2004), these ethnically-mixed families gave rise to early Daohua.

Acuo (2004) further argues that Daohua is a product formed under a high degree of communicative pressure in the first generation, bi-ethnic families as Chinese boatmen and their Tibetan wives urgently sought a medium of verbal communication. He proposes an early version of Daohua as a combined result of imperfect learning on the Tibetan side and compromised or simplified "foreign talk" on the Chinese side. After it began to be acquired by the children of the first generation and later generations as their first language, this spontaneous and inconsistent intermediate speech gradually became stable and consistent. It was "fossilized" (as Acuo calls it) as Daohua by later generations.

It is insightful to point out the motivation behind the origins of Daohua from a socio-cultural perspective. However, in terms of the mechanisms of such genesis, more focus is put on the first generation, who were more or less monolingual; their bilingual children and later



generations who were capable in both Tibetan and Daohua<sup>1</sup> seem to not play an important role in this process other than readily learning Daohua from their parents. While it has been made clear that the first generation of ethnic contact initiated the genesis of Daohua, the contribution of later generations to the development and establishment of Daohua remains unclear.

According to the ethnic annals edited by Kangding Nationality Teachers College (1994, hereafter KNTC) and YCA (2000), the first twenty boatmen did not stay long after the 1719 suppression. They lived in Yajiang County for three years and were replaced by another group of Chinese boatmen. Every three years, the boatmen on duty were replaced. Presumably a pidgin of some sort was created by both Chinese boatmen and local Tibetans to facilitate simple inter-ethnic communication during the time the first group of boatmen was on duty.<sup>2</sup>

Later, due to recurrent ferry accidents caused by new boatmen who were unfamiliar with the conditions of the Yalong River, the main river in Yajiang County, the government stopped the rotation and settled boatmen as permanent residents in Yajiang. This new policy largely enabled inter-ethnic marriage between the Chinese boatmen who stayed permanently and local Tibetan women. Consequently, the pidgin began to be used at homes.

Despite the absence of an exact population figure, historical records (KNTC 1994 and YCA 2000) show small-scale, but continuous Chinese immigration after the final settlement of the boatmen. As a result of continuous immigration, the ethnically-mixed community of

---

<sup>1</sup> In fact, it is likely that later generations were also capable in Chinese in decades after the mid-twentieth century due to formal education as we discuss later.

<sup>2</sup> A reviewer noted that, beyond Yajiang, pidgins were used all across the Chinese-Tibetan frontier in Yunnan, Sichuan, and Gansu at different times in Chinese history. While this is the case, Dede (2016) has pointed out that not all early pidgins eventually evolved into bilingual mixed languages such as Daohua. Daohua speakers remain bilingual in the mixed language and Tibetan, whereas the speakers of many other mixed languages on the Chinese-Tibetan frontier are not bilingual with non-Sinitic languages.

families and extended families grew, which enabled children to fully interact on a daily basis not only with their parents, but also with their siblings, peers, and other adult role models in the community. As those children matured, the early pidgin further developed beyond the domestic realm and became a medium of community-wide communication in Yajiang. Therefore, Daohua as a somewhat stabilized language may not have occurred until one or two generations after the policy of permanent settlement was adopted.

The earliest traceable census was conducted in the early twentieth century. KNTC (1994) cites a 1936 government report that states there were approximately 430 Chinese households in Yajiang County in 1904. Supposing four people per household, the record suggests that there were around 1,700 Chinese dwelling in that area.

The census conducted in 1911 reported by YCA (2000), shows that there were 860 households in Yajiang County, accounting for approximately 4,600 people, with all ethnic groups included. Based on both historical reports, it is reasonable to conclude that by the beginning of the twentieth century, Chinese residents constituted nearly half of the local population. These data show that from the early eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, continuous Chinese immigration changed the Yajiang demographic structure from purely Tibetan to more-or-less even.

If one compares the development of Daohua in this period with the two types of emergence of creoles as concluded in Winford (2003), it becomes clear that Daohua parallels the so-called "intermediate" creole. Winford distinguishes intermediate creole from radical creole: the formation of the former (for instance, Bajan and Reunionnais) is due to close and consistent contact with the superstrate source language based on natural increase of population, while the shaping of the latter (for instance, Suriname) is mainly due to the processes of (imperfect) second language acquisition of the English-lexicon contact varieties (rather than varieties of English *per se*) by constant resupply of African slaves.

In the case of the formation process of Daohua, from early versions on, it was spoken in a family setting with close contact

between the two source languages. Besides, as a living resource of the superstrate language, Chinese speakers were never recorded withdrawing from Yajiang on a large scale after their final settlement in this county. Therefore, it is likely that alongside continuous first language (Tibetan, hereafter L1) substratal input, early Daohua speakers also had constant access to their second language (Chinese, hereafter L2) as the superstrate language.

In other words, for each generation of early Daohua speakers, despite the existence of preliminary versions of Daohua, they still had the superstrate language (Chinese) as the target language, the direct input of which was not severely restricted as it was in cases of the emergence of many radical creoles. The availability and accessibility of Chinese prevented the restricting process of early Daohua from drastically shifting as far away from the superstrate language as the radical creoles.

By the 1950s, according to YCA (2000), the vast majority of early Chinese immigrants had merged with Tibetans in all aspects, including language, religious practice, life style, habit, and even mentality. Consequently, in the mid-twentieth century, the government reclassified the descendants of the early Chinese immigrants as ethnically Tibetan. Only new immigrants who moved to Yajiang County after the ethnic reclassification were recognized as Han Chinese.

This explains why in a roughly coeval document, Fu (1941) reports that out of 20,649 residents in Yajiang County, 20,018 were Tibetan, while the previous calculation suggests an approximately equal population of Chinese and Tibetans in the mid-twentieth century. Although it is not entirely clear why the overall Tibetan population dramatically increased between 1911 and 1941, it could be that most of the earlier Chinese immigrants had been Tibetanized to such an extent that they were recognized as *de facto* Tibetans. In the process of ethnic amalgamation, although it seems highly possible that some Chinese speakers shifted to Tibetan, Daohua probably played an important role in constructing a shared local ethnic identity.

---

FROM THE EARLY 1950S TO THE PRESENT

---

The earliest recorded Chinese school in Yajiang County opened in 1908. In the followings decades, a few other public and private schools opened to teach Chinese. Schools of this kind usually enrolled less than twenty students (YCA 2000). However, due to political unrest, enrollment was generally unstable over the years. Even if enrollment was sufficient for a time, those schools still functioned with difficulty. Chinese classes were inconsistently taught in Yajiang until the early 1950s.

Shortly after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Standard Mandarin became the official language and was promoted across the county as the common speech (Putonghua) of the new nation. In response to this policy, starting from the early 1950s, elementary and middle schools in Yajiang gradually began regularly offering mandatory Chinese courses (YCA 2000). Furthermore, starting from February 1953, some elementary schools also added Tibetan to their curriculum.<sup>1</sup>

The development of Daohua is divided into two periods based on the launch of nationwide mandatory Chinese language classes. This is because this event guaranteed consistent and formal access to the superstrate language for Daohua speakers as never before. As Winford

---

<sup>1</sup> A reviewer suggested that some Tibetan language educational opportunities might also have historically been available to the Daohua-speaking community, e.g., the monastic community might have played some educational role for Daohua speakers. While other forms of language education in Yajiang may have been present, we found no specific, direct evidence of such from the historical records available to this study. *The Annals of the Danba County* (Danba County Annals Committee 1996), a county neighboring Yajiang, reports that until the early twentieth century, Danba had *sishu* 'private schools' run by local religious practitioners who taught students to spell and read Tibetan scriptures. Such schools normally had only about ten students. This suggests that Tibetan language education was not easily accessible to the majority of the Danba population. Given the similar demographic landscape shared by Yajiang and Danba, the availability of Tibetan language education was perhaps also limited to Daohua speakers in Yajiang.

(2003) points out, most researchers have agreed that creole formation parallels second language acquisition (hereafter SLA), with the former being a special form of the latter under various degrees of restriction to the target language. Not monitored by native speakers, in general, creole formation does not resemble classroom SLA as much as it does natural SLA in terms of the processes of grammar restructuring.

In the case of Daohua, for more than a century before the mid-twentieth century, it had limited and yet constantly available access to Chinese due to consistent Chinese immigration. From the 1950s on, given the new language policy, Daohua speakers continued acquiring the target language in an everyday and natural way - the result of new waves of Chinese immigrants after the reclassification of ethnicity. They were also provided with superstrate speakers' institutional assistance. Both classroom SLA and natural SLA have been available to Daohua speakers since the 1950s.

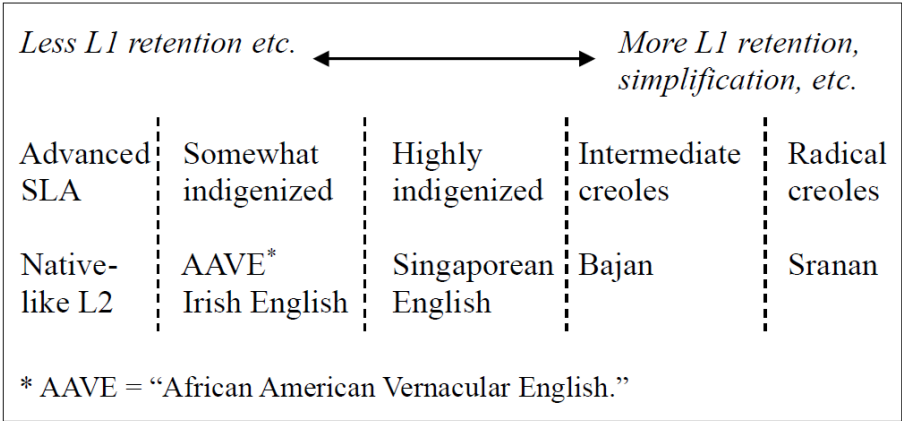
In the following section, I propose that after the 1950s, the development of Daohua highly resembles the formation process of Colloquial Singaporean English, commonly known as Singlish. Such resemblance is shown in both language structure and socio-historical context.

In terms of structure, there are a series of similarities. Both languages experienced substantial L1 influence. In the case of Singlish, L1 influence is so strong that it restructured the target language from a mildly agglutinative language (English) to a typically more isolated one resembling the substrate languages - Chinese and Malay (Ansaldo 2010). Similarly, Daohua speakers' L1 (Tibetan) affected their acquisition of the target language (Chinese) and changed the typology of the target language from nominative-accusative to ergative-absolutive. In Singlish, scholars have shown a systemic transfer of zero-copula, predicative adjectives, topic prominence, and aspectual system from the substrate language to the superstrate recipient (Bao 2005, Bao and Lye 2005, Ansaldo 2010). In Daohua, similarly, aspects and moods are marked by attaching certain morphemes to verbs as in Tibetan (Acuo 2004). In addition, most of the lexical forms are from the superstrate languages with a certain degree of reanalysis in both

Singlish and Daohua.

Similarities are also found in their socio-historical contexts. First, both superstrate languages are official languages of the creole speakers' communities and hence gained government support. Second, the promotion of both languages had institutional help. That is, students who are creole speakers learn these superstrate speeches as second languages in school. Both target languages, English and Chinese, have grown as the medium of classroom instruction in local schools, gradually replacing other languages in formal education. In the case of Singlish, Malay and Chinese are replaced (Ansaldo 2010); in the case of Daohua, Tibetan is replaced (YCA 2004). Both factors make Daohua different from more radical creoles that lie on the more L1 retention/simplification side of the continuum of outcomes of language shift (Winford 2003:256) in terms of less restricted access to the superstrate language, which gives rise to relatively successful SLA. Figure 1 shows this continuum.

Figure 1. A continuum of outcomes of language shift.



Status as a basilect in a multiethnic and multilingual society is another important social feature that Daohua shares with Singlish. Singlish is the low register *lingua franca* spoken by most Singaporeans as either a first or second language (Ansaldo 2010). According to Acuo's fieldwork (personal communication), this is the same case as Daohua in Yajiang. While Chinese is the official language, Daohua is

also widely used in the domestic setting and in various public domains. Nevertheless, Daohua is also widely used in the domestic setting and in various public domains.

In addition to being the first language for less than 3,000 people in no more than eight villages, Daohua also performs the role of a second language for speakers of both Tibetan and Chinese in Yajiang, both in the county town and in remote villages. Although there seems to be a Chinese-Daohua diglossia, with Chinese being the acrolect and Daohua being the basilect, Acuo points out that a large number of Chinese speakers are willing to learn and speak Daohua. The reason is that Daohua is generally valued by the local society as representing intimacy and localness. This contrasts with Yajiang people's perception of Chinese, which is usually regarded as more formal and authoritative.

Acuo has also noticed the variation that recently occurred within Daohua. In villages located closer to Yajiang County Town, Daohua varieties have begun to be influenced by Chinese in terms of both word use and grammar. These changes have not been found in remote villages. This observation hints at the possibility of a more advanced SLA, viz., moving further towards the end of relatively successful SLA in Winford's (2003) scale shown in Figure 1. If this is indeed the case, then we are able to infer the genesis of Daohua as some sort of pidgin and its earlier development as an intermediate creole. We are also able to observe its later development towards a more advanced SLA, in process of which the degree of indigenization is gradually bleached out.

## CONCLUSION

This study has briefly discussed the social contexts of the development of Daohua in the past three centuries and shows how such social contexts were not homogeneous through history. This study relies on social - especially demographic - evidence and divides the development of Daohua into two stages. The watershed moment is in

the early 1950s when Chinese began to be consistently offered in schools in Yajiang.

In the first stage, from the genesis of Daohua to the early 1950s, creole formation resembled natural SLA. Due to the constant input of the superstrate language by continuous Chinese immigration, Daohua developed as an intermediate creole without processes of radical restructuring. In the second stage, because of everyday contact with Chinese speakers and of the formal, consistent classroom instruction of Chinese, the formation of Daohua changed to a combination of both natural SLA and monitored SLA. Both the social contexts of Daohua in this stage and its linguistic features are reminiscent of Singlish. In addition, fieldwork observations suggest the potential for Daohua to move towards outcomes of more advanced SLA.

The case of Daohua suggests that the formation of creoles is not static. Rather, in different stages of its formation, a creole might develop in different directions in line with changes in the social context. Particular social contexts, for instance the degree and frequency of demographic change as well as educational policy, bring about very specific development of creoles. Only in considering social contexts alongside linguistic evidence can we see a whole picture of creole formation. This, again, echoes Winford (2003) and Singler (2008).

Further research might explore the synchronic difference between various versions of Daohua. Acuo's observations (personal communication) suggest, there are at least four versions of Daohua, namely, the varieties spoken in remote villages as L1, in more urban regions as L1, in the county town by Chinese speakers as L2, and in the county town by Tibetans as L2. The former two vary in terms of the extent to which Chinese influences them, and the latter two vary in terms of the Daohua learners' L1. The distinction between the native versions of Daohua as spoken by the first two groups and the non-native versions, which are acquired as L2 by Chinese and Tibetan speakers in the latter two groups, is unknown.

Between the latter two groups of L2 speakers of Daohua, it is also worth investigating how Chinese and Tibetan speakers impose



their more proficient languages (presumably Chinese and Tibetan, respectively) on Daohua, the less proficient language. Now that Daohua as a Chinese-Tibetan creole has become the target language for Chinese and Tibetan speakers, to what extent can they acquire it? What are the specific ways in which they compensate for their lack of proficiency in L2? How are the compensation strategies different between Chinese and Tibetan speakers? How would these non-native versions of Daohua impact the development of Daohua itself? These research questions are of great interest, given the tension among these three languages that are used side by side in Yajiang.

#### REFERENCES

- Acuo, Yixiweisa 意西微薩 • 阿錯. 2001. "Zang han hunhe yu "daohua" shulüe 藏漢混合語"倒話"述略 [A Survey of Daohua: a Sino-Tibet Creole]. *Yuyan yanjiu 語言研究 [Linguistic Research]* (3):109-126.
- . 2004. *Daohua yanjiu 倒話研究 [A Study of the Daohua Language]*. Beijing 北京: Minzu chubanshe 民族出版社 [Nationalities Press].
- Ansaldo, Umberto. 2010. Contact and Asian Varieties of English in R Hickey (ed) *The Handbook of Language Contact*. Malden, MA/Oxford: Blackwell, 498-517.
- Bao Zhiming. 2005. The Aspectual System of Singapore English and the Systemic Substratist Explanation. *Journal of Linguistics* 41:237-67.
- and Lye Hui Min. 2005. Systemic Transfer, Topic Prominence, and the Bare Conditional in Singapore English. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 20:269-291.
- Danba xian zhibian zuan weiyuanhui 丹巴縣誌編纂委員會 [Danba County Annals Committee, DCA]. 1996. *Danba xianzhi 丹巴縣誌 [The Annals of the Danba County]*. Beijing 北京: Minzu chubanshe 民族出版社 [Nationalities Press].

- Dede, Keith. 2016. Mixed Languages *in* Rint Sybesma, Wolfgang Behr, Zev Handel, and CT James Huang (eds) *Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics*. Leiden: Brill.
- Fu Shuangwu 傅雙無. 1941. *Sichuan bianqu ge minzu zhi renkou shuzi* 四川邊區各民族之人口數字 [*Population of Ethnic Groups in Border Areas of Sichuan*]. Chengdu 成都: Shu sheng shudian 書生書店 [Scholar Bookstore].
- Kangding minzu shifan gaodeng zhuanke xuexiao 康定民族師範高等專科學校 [Kangding Nationality Teachers College, KNTC]. 1994. *Ganzi zangzu zizhi zhou: minzu zhi* 甘孜藏族自治州: 民族誌 [*The Ethnic Annals of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture*]. Beijing 北京: Dangdai zhongguo chubanshe 當代中國出版社 [Contemporary China Press].
- Singler, John Victor. 2008. The Sociolinguistic Context of Creole Genesis *in* Silvia Kouwenberg and John Victor Singler (eds) *The Handbook of Pidgin and Creole Studies*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 332-358.
- Sun Hongkai 孫宏開, Hu Zengyi 胡增益, and Huang Xing 黃行 (eds). 2007. *Zhongguo de yuyan* 中國的語言 [*The Languages of China*]. Beijing 北京: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館 [Commercial Press].
- Yajiang xian zhibian zuan weiyuanhui 雅江縣誌編纂委員會 [Yajiang County Annals Committee, YCA]. 2000. *Yajiang xianzhi* 雅江縣誌 [*The Annals of Yajiang County*]. Chengdu 成都: Ba shu shushe 巴蜀書社 [Bashu Publishing House].
- Winford, Donald. 2003. *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell.

---

NON-ENGLISH TERMS

Chen Litong 陳利砵

Danba 丹巴

Daohua 倒話

Gansu 甘肅

Ganzi 甘孜

Kangding 康定

Putonghua 普通話

Sichuan 四川

Sishu 私塾

Yajiang 雅江

Yalong 雅礱

*yi'sang*<sup>2</sup> 衣裳

Yunnan 雲南